MUTINY

A PAPER OF ANARCHISTIC IDEAS & ACTIONS
#23 FEBRUARY 2008

Iemma's Electrical Neoliberalism

Neither Church Nor That Other Church

The Politics Of Gendered Oppression

A Regional Anarchist Convergence Towards a Federation

Free!

Mutiny began as a group exploring different ways to resist war at home & abroad. We started a monthly zine to explore different avenues of disobedience. We know there are lots of radical ideas around & we want people to write about their experiences & opinions. The Mutiny collective is meeting regularly again: we're looking at Australian imperialism & avenues of resistance in the Pacific & the region. Contact us if you're interested.

(The mutiny zine collective does not necessarily agree with all the opinions of contributors. Contributors do not necessarily agree with all the opinions of the mutiny collective. The mutiny collective doesn't agree with all the opinions of the mutiny collective.)

Editors for this month:
Princess Mob, SourDough, Dumpstered Twin,
Graf Cat and Angry Nerd.

Remember every month we need contributions!
From brief news & reviews to longer articles.
And pictures! We love pictures!!

c/- po box 4, enmore, nsw, 2042, australia
mutineers@graffiti.net

Back issues of *Mutiny* can be found at: http://www.mpi-web.net/mutiny

Subscribe to *Mutiny!* Get the new zine every month, and help us make sure we have enough money to print it! If you can give out extra copies, we can send a number of zines for no extra charge.

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Email: _____

I have enclosed (well concealed cash only please):

____ $5 (3 months) ____ $10 (6 months) $____ (donation)

I would like each month: ____ 1 copy ____ 5 copies ____ copies

_____

Send to: PO Box 4 / Enmore / NSW / 2042 / Australia
mutineers@graffiti.net
Please write or email about bulk distribution, or for any special requests.

Brief news

Aotearoa: Waitangi Day protests

Waitangi Day saw protests in several places across Aotearoa, with Tangata Whenua [people of the land, ie Maori] and Tau Iwi [tribes other than Maori who dwell here on Aotearoa] standing together to demand Tino Rangatiratanga and Mana Motuhake [both terms refer to self-determination/Maori sovereignty].

In Waitangi itself, "thousands of tangata whenua, pakeha [Ango or non-Maori descent] and tau iwi marched together in the hikoi [protest march or parade] to the treaty grounds with Tino Rangatiratanga and Mana Motuhake flags flying behind the Kotahitanga [unity] flag. A large contingent from Tuhoe was leading the hikoi, including some of the Urewera 17 activists. Key issues raised during this year's Waitangi Day were the Resource Management Act, the Foreshore and Seabed legislation and the October 15 "anti-terror" raids."

In Tamaki Makaurau (Auckland), members and supporters of the sovereignty group Te Ata Tino Toa gathered today to fly the largest known Tino Rangatiratanga flag above the Auckland Harbour Bridge. A slow procession of cars also went across the Bridge flying Tino Rangatiratanga and Te Mana Motuhake o Tuhoe flags, while a boat went underneath flying a flag.

Te Whanganui A Tara (Wellington) saw around 30 people take a "Tour Of Oppression" around various sites in the central city.

On the other side of the world, the New Zealand embassy in Berlin, Germany, was spraypainted with "Tino Rangatiratanga" and "Drop the Urewera charges".

In Melbourne, Australia, a protest was also held, with speakers including indigenous people from all over the world, from the Mapuche people (Chile) to Australian Aborigines (Jirrbal Nation, Krautungalung, Gunnai Nation and more).

Waitangi Day also saw the launch of Tu Kotahi - Freedom Fighting Anthems, a double benefit CD. All the money raised will be split between organisations directly supporting those affected by the raids, and also working on consciousness-raising programmes around the issue.

From http://indymedia.org.nz

Oaxaca city, Oaxaca, Mexico: Revenge-killing for brutal 2006 repression

Prominent police officer Alejandro Barrita Ortiz was assassinated yesterday morning. The incident appears to be linked to the fact that he played a key role in the repression of the Oaxacan anti-government uprising of 2006 that saw control of the state capitol fall into the hands of the Oaxacan People's Popular Assembly (APPO). An anonymous phone caller claimed responsibility for the killing on behalf of the Marxist-Leninist guerrilla group the Popular Revolutionary Army (EPR). The caller explained that Barrita Ortiz was the first, and that there were "two more left to go".

Numerous activists were shot and killed by paramilitary goon squads of plain clothed police, state employees and their supporters, including American journalist and anarchists activist Brad Will. Once the uprising had been violently put down dozens of activists were disappeared, brutalized and raped by police forces.

Barrita Ortiz, director of the Auxiliary, Industrial, Banking and Commercial Police, had been identified as having played a key role in the police operations during and in the aftermath of the 2006 uprising. He was alleged to have been responsible for coordinating illegal detentions of activists, as well as extra judicial paramilitary operations during the uprising.

The assassination took place in the "El Tequio" sports park near the international airport. Accounts vary, one reports the assassins used a .38 and 9mm handguns, and another purports AK-47s were used. According to the second version, the assassins fled the scene in a red pick-up and a black Dodge Stratus.

From http://bombsandshields.blogspot.com/

Australia: Pip Starr 1967–2008

Pip Starr, documentary maker, video activist and great companion, passed away on Tuesday the 22nd of January 2008. Pip had worked closely within the activism community for 10 years as an independent journalist, reporter, and filmmaker who documented anti-nuclear, climate change, globalisation, indigenous and many more movements largely in Australia and the Pacific. He had also been involved with Friends of the Earth Australia for many years.

Pip produced an enormous amount of work during his time. Chances are if you see some iconic footage of the 1998 Jabiluka blockade, the Melbourne S11 protests against the World Economic Forum in 2000, or Woomera detention centre protest in 2002, Pip shot it. He was always in the thick of it.

Aboriginal activist Gary Foley introduced him to the Jabiluka campaign against a new uranium mine in 1998 which resulted in *Fight for Country*. "Gary made me understand the importance of filmmaking as a documentation of history," Pip described on his website. The film took 4 years to complete of which a year was spent living and documenting the Jabiluka blockade established by the Mirrar Aboriginal people.

In recent years Pip's filmmaking grew further and he embarked on several large projects that took him around the world, from the coffee plantations of Honduras to the rising sea levels of besieged Carteret Islands. Unfortunately much of this work is uncompleted. At the time of his death he was seeking finance to complete the film *The First Wave* documenting the relocation of the Carteret Islanders due to human induced global warming.

Pip worked for many years as a part-time nurse in The Alfred Hospital in Melbourne, dealing with major road traumas, and witnessing time and time again the violence that is the motor car. Consequently, one of his first documentaries was a film of a Reclaim the Streets action in Sydney.

Pip's philosophy as a documentary filmmaker as described on his website states that:

I've been making documentary films in and about various activist communities for over 10 years. Most doco's are about human and environmental issues of local, national and international significance. I believe documentary should be beautiful and entertaining as well as emotionally and intellectually stimulating. I have always been inspired by the work of activists and others who have a long term vision for the world that is about peace and real sustainability.

For reasons many of us are still trying to understand, Pip chose to take his own life, a life that had so much possibility. His contribution was enormous and his departure will leave a great hole in the world of radical documentary film.

You can find some of Pip's films on his website - http://starr.tv
and on EngageMedia - http://www.engagemedia.org/author/pipstarr

From http://sydney.indymedia.org by Takver

Iemma's electrical neoliberalism: a brief overview by Syzygy

Last December Morris Iemma & the state NSW Labor cabinet declared their plans to privatise the retail sector of NSW electricity. This followed from a report produced in September by the conservative Owen Inquiry into Electricity Supply in NSW (set up by Iemma in April). Although they have denied it in electoral contexts, privatisation has been a long-standing aim of Treasurer Michael Costa & the Iemma government.

Despite substantial political opposition & overwhelming public scepticism (70% of people oppose electricity privatisation, despite a $380,000 advertising campaign), Costa and Iemma have expressed determination to continue on with the plans. Specific measures of the plans entail: selling retailers Energy Australia, Integral Energy and Country Energy, leasing NSW's power generators to privately owned companies & encouraging the consolidation and expansion of existing energy cartels.

This is a clear neoliberal attack on both 'ordinary' people and-through the interconnected promotion of coal-fired power stations rather than renewable energy- the environment.
The plan is backed by Federal Labor. After a meeting of cabinet on December 17, Wayne Swan told the Australian: "We [the cabinet] support the Premier of NSW in his efforts to increase investment and competition in the nation's electricity market." Federal Energy Minister Martin Ferguson declared that Iemma had the backing of all state energy ministers.

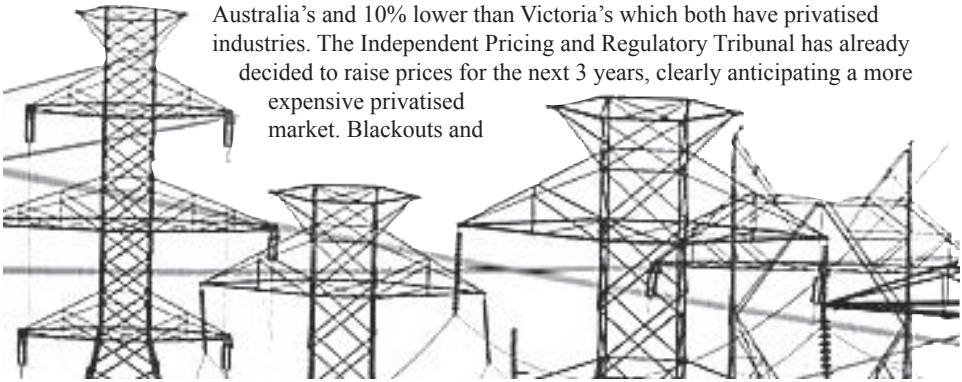
In her book *Power Play* Wollongong academic Sharon Beder recounts the broader context of international struggles over electricity and power. She emphasizes struggles in the UK, America & Australia over the last century.

According to Beder the shift towards electricity privatisation is a trend inextricably linked to the promulgation of the neoliberal Washington Consensus, which has led to the rapid deregulation of services & industries across the world. Under this paradigm, governments & multinational corporations increasingly seek to privatise the most basic aspects of our daily lives. This comes in the context of a broader attempt to consolidate a shift away from public services in the Australian region at large.

Neoliberal attacks

Reports from the United Services Union & Unions NSW highlight some of the ways in which the plans will attack everyday lives.

Prices will almost certainly increase. NSW's power prices are currently 30% lower than South Australia's and 10% lower than Victoria's which both have privatised industries. The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal has already decided to raise prices for the next 3 years, clearly anticipating a more expensive privatised market. Blackouts and



power failures are more likely- in Auckland, New Zealand a privatised system collapsed in 1998 causing chaos for up to 2 months. Jobs and basic economic security will be threatened.

Transnational corporations are likely to take advantage of the situation. Retail energy suppliers AGL Energy and Origin Energy, which own energy assets in other states, have been arguing for years that the NSW power facilities should be sold off. Other possible contenders include Babcock & Brown Power and Hong Kong-based TRUenergy.

Such companies can use crises & blackouts as a form of blackmail. In 1998 in Quebec a U.S company shut down its plant until it could get its desired price. In the Dominican Republic a cartel of electricity corporations cut off the national electricity supply until the government paid its debt.

Due to their size (and lack of accountability to national regulatory mechanisms), such corporations are exceptionally well placed to pressure governments, disregard employees & set prices. The 2005 passing of the US-Australia FTA renders this situation even more dire, with extremely limited protection of domestic industry (the lesser evil) in this area.

Climate Change

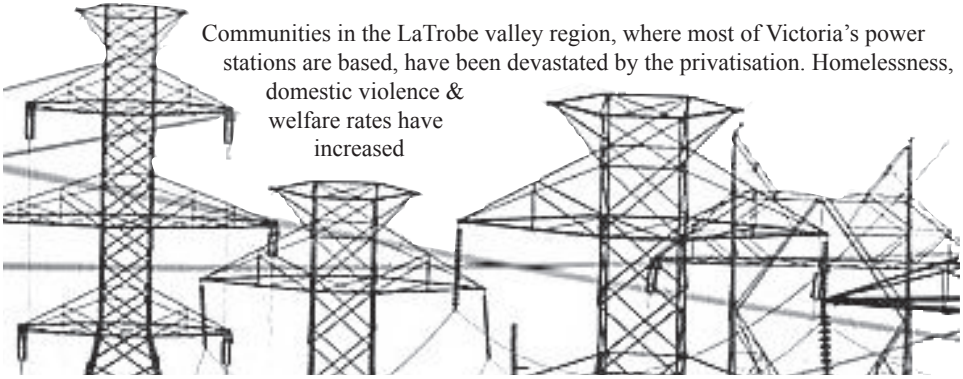
The plans deal a significant blow to hope for real action on climate change. The state's coal-fired power stations which will be privatised emit more than 55 million tonnes of CO_2 each year. This is already among NSW's most significant contributions to dangerous climate change. It means that perhaps 35% of the state's greenhouse gas emissions will be handed over to corporate control. Donella Meadows of *Grist* Magazine describes the situation in post-privatisation California: "the market competes for the lowest up-front price, not the lowest price over the lifetime of a product," thus helping to rule out attention to long-term environmental concerns.

A further consequence of the proposal is likely to be the production of a new baseload power station. This will almost certainly be coal-fired, given the lack of incentive for corporates to choose environmentally sound alternatives. Such a move will substantially shift impetus away from the development of renewable energy sources & their integration into everyday use.

Moreover, it will further reinforce the idea that there are market-driven, private solutions to climate change; rather than acknowledging that it necessitates a shift towards greater planning and public control.

Victoria

The Victorian example, where the Kennett government privatised the electricity and gas industries in the mid-late 90s provides a glimpse of what can be expected in NSW. Employment conditions have been steadily deteriorating, with workers forced to rebid for contracts every few years, invariably at a lower wage.



Communities in the LaTrobe valley region, where most of Victoria's power stations are based, have been devastated by the privatisation. Homelessness, domestic violence & welfare rates have increased

substantially. A flock of multinationals were drawn into the region, driving out domestic competition & undermining another source of income for many people.

The Victorian instance also pertinently illustrates the way in which privatisation exacerbates the environmental crisis. Before privatisation the Hazelwood power station-the region's dirtiest & most significant contributor to climate change- was due to be decommissioned by the SECV (State Electricity of Victoria) by 2005, as were older plants at Newport and Yallourn.

However Hazelwood had its licence to mine coal extended by the Victorian Government on 6 September 2005. This agreement ensures a coal supply to the plant until at least 2030 by allowing access to 43 million tonnes of brown coal deposits in a realignment of Hazelwood's mining licence boundaries that were originally set in 1996. Even the right-wing ESAA (Electricity Suppliers Association) admits that energy deregulation had caused a 31% increase in greenhouse emissions by 2001.

Prospects for a campaign

There has been a strong mobilization of opposition to the moves by unions & from rank & file members within the Labor party.

A major rally has been called for February 26, with Unions NSW estimating that 14,000 workers will march on state parliament. It looks for now as if there is a real possibility that Iemma may have overstretched.

Although the anti-privatisation campaign so far has been within firmly social-democratic terrain- with a focus on ensuring 'our' jobs are not sent overseas & on protecting 'our' energy supplies, there is scope for it to be something more meaningful.

While negotiating with Labor hacks & union bureaucrats is not of interest, a focus on the combination of environmental and working class elements offers room for the creation of tangible links & alliances. If the climate crisis is to be a catalyst for a radical change (hopefully a revolutionary agent of the 21st century!) it must necessarily be integrated into daily bread & butter struggles. This campaign provides a useful starting point to make that a reality.

Black Rose Anarchist Library & Bookshop

Coming up at Black Rose:
Sunday March 2, 6.30 pm
Clue (1985): A comedy-mystery based on the board game Cluedo.

Black Rose is open:
thursday & friday 11-7
saturday & sunday 11-5

22 Enmore Rd (100m from Newtown Station)
e: blackrosebooks@yahoo.com.au
P: 0424 490 792

accessibility: there are three steps at the entrance. the toilet is not easily accessible

Jura Books Planning Workshop

8 Mar 2008, 2pm

At this workshop we will discuss Jura's future - what we should do, what we shouldn't do, what we'd like to do & what we can do. We hope to set some solid priorities for the next year & some more ambitious goals for the next few years. We really want as much involvement as possible - that means YOU! This is a 'Jura User's Meeting' - it's for everyone who has any interest at all in the project, not just the regular collective members. Please come along & have your say!

In preparation, have a look at the survey & draft plan at www. jura.org.au
What do you think?

Jura Books
440 Paramatta Rd, Petersham
Phone: (02) 9550 9931

the politics of gendered oppression

by griff-daw

The following are notes from the 'trans, genderqueer and feminism' workshop that I was a part of running at the Out of the Silence conference in Melbourne last December and recently at the Live and Let DIY Fest in Brisvegas. Please note that the workshop serves to critique feminist politics that exclude trans* and genderqueer folk, with the aim to have dialogue around the ways in which our organising reinforces the gender binary and around ways that we can create spaces that are supportive of all genders. It is not purely about hating on feminism.*

When envisaging libratory feminism and trans* and genderqueer struggles, its important to see them as inherently anti-capitalist. What's more, it is difficult to not see the struggles of trans* and genderqueer folk as being intimately connected to feminist struggles. Indeed, through recognising and fostering these common elements in the ways that we organise and spaces that we create, provide great strength for these struggles and a revolutionary politic.

The precondition to capitalist development was the process that Foucault defined as the 'disciplining of the body'. This consisted of any attempt by the state and the church to transform the individual's powers into labour power. The imposition of capitalism required, not only the dispossession of the peasantry from the commons, but also the production of a disciplined work force. The witch hunts, largely of the 18th century, played a crucial role in this production, and at the very least, served to criminalise those who dared to deviate from the new rigidity required. An element of this rigidity was the imposition of very specific gender roles, which were and are still necessary for the 'stable' functioning of a capitalist society.

Many elements of feminist politics have always held that the gender binary and gender roles play a very specific and integral role in the maintenance of capitalist society. For example, marriage is in many ways necessary for capitalism, as it facilitates the reproduction of the workforce, serves to compliment the capitalist economy through domestic unpaid labour and commodifies our intimate relations. Marriage has always served to structurally oppress women and queers, and gender roles – rigid ideas around what it is to be a man or a woman – are at the forefront of this institution.

There are strands of feminism that largely ignore the link between capitalism and the oppression of women, choosing to see masculinity and men themselves as the sole oppressors. Essentialist feminism is one such strand, and it holds that the basis of women's unity is an essential sameness - some core experience of one's body and oppression. This unity is counterposed against masculinity and men as fundamentally oppressive forces of domination and oppression. Essentialist feminism erases and ignores the ways that white supremacy and class drastically separate women folk in racist structures of privilege, power and domination.

Further, this idea of feminism reinforces the gender binary by labelling 'masculinity' as oppressive and therefore 'femininity' as good. When in fact a person's masculinity is actually removed from whether or not they are being a sexist arsehole- I've seen lots of femme women identifying folk be extremely sexist.

Creating a dialogue around the inextricably linked nature of feminist and trans* and genderqueer struggles, though seemingly pretty abstract, is important in thinking about ways that we can organise that truly reject the gender binary and that are supportive of the spectrum of genders.

The importance of this dialogue is highlighted when, for example, feminist events or women's-only spaces are trans* exclusive. The Michigan Womyn's Music Festival is one event that is overtly trans* exclusive. The festival organisers have always excluded trans* women from attending, and this policy sends a message that trans* women aren't real women. At the same time, the festival seems to be fine about trans* dudes attending, however this is generally through the acceptance of them as being a variation of a 'dyke'. Not only is the festival transphobic in that trans* women aren't accepted as women, but it is also transphobic in its complete negation of a trans* or genderqueer identity. Camp Trans, as a protest to the exclusionary and transphobic nature of the festival, happens out the front of the fest each year.

This example raises important points around women's-only spaces that are not simply inclusive of trans* and genderqueer folk, but that they are spaces owned by these folk too. This not an attempt to abolish women's-only spaces - they are definitely important spaces to have. Further, male-identified individuals should not be part of these. However, when it comes to trans* and genderqueer identities it's not quite as simple – there ain't no clear lines. Firstly, any trans* woman should own women's-only spaces just as any other biological-women may. Secondly, a lot of trans* dudes have a long history with the queer women's movement and they often find it the most safe and supportive space for them. Many members of the women's community may also be transitioning or questioning their gender identity and the exclusion of these folk from women's-only spaces only serves to weaken the unity and strength of struggles against gendered oppression.

The dialogue around trans* and genderqueer identities is brutally important and whilst its necessary that any revolutionary politic has a strong analysis of the gender binary, its not enough. We need to wholeheartedly examine what it means to organise and live in ways that are not simply 'inclusive' spaces, but are spaces that are supportive and nurturing of all genders.

Note - trans is used to mean transgender or transexual. with transgender meaning that a persons gender identity is diffferent to that which they were assigned at birth and a transexual is someone who physically changes their body to match their gender identity.*

A Regional Anarchist Convergence: Towards a Federation

Easter weekend March 21–24, 2008

Northcote, Melbourne – location TBA

This is an invitation open to all anarchists and anti-authoritarian revolutionaries, to stake a claim on the present as our revolutionary moment in the face of the thousands of repressions by the state and capitalism.

Over the last five years there have been a number of large convergences about anarchism/autonomism, generally connected to major summit protests. While these moments were important, there has been a lack of space for more thorough & detailed discussions of what our politics mean here & now, & for questions about the development of substantial anarchist, revolutionary & liberatory groups throughout society at large. This is an opportunity to do so.

An anarchist federation has been proposed. The proposal & discussion about it can be seen at http://afederation.wordpress.com.

Some things that could be achieved from a new organisation include, but are not limited to:

- improved solidarity work when individuals and collectives face state repression;
- better support for anarchist spaces that already exist & the production of a regular regional publication;
- the development of greater momentum & support when collectives around the region are organising around similar issues.

If we are to move towards such organisation there is much to be discussed with anarchists of various tendencies and experiences. People who agree broadly with the politics expressed in the federation proposal, whether or not they identify as anarchists, are most welcome to join the convergence.

Revolutionary federations have a long history, including in this region, with varying success. So we ask, what is the right way to do it? And is now the right time?

To try and avoid another talkfest that ends in disarray, the conference will be structured around the hope of starting a federation. But we understand that not everyone who comes might end up wanting to join a federation – or, that we may not even form a federation at all. Still, we hope that coming together to discuss our tactics & ideas & improve our communication will in itself be a success.

Involvement

We strongly encourage people to talk about their thoughts in collectives and affinity groups beforehand, and to form proposals that can be discussed through spokescouncil structures. If people are unable to come to the convergence, we encourage you to send written responses & suggestions.

If you are interested in helping organise the convergence please get in touch with us (see our e-mail below). We want to make the process as decentralised and horizontal as possible, & hope that practical tasks could be divided among different groups, so please let us know if you can help with anything in particular.

There is also an e-list for organising practical aspects of the convergence. E-mail us for details.

Tasks include:

- Safer spaces & grievance
- Compiling a reader
- Website
- Fundraising
- Writing a draft programme
- Transportation
- Facilitating meetings
- Childcare

We are looking at doing fundraisers to subsidise travel for people who may have to come long distances. E-mail us if this would help you. In addition, please let us know if there are any other issues that may stop you from coming to the conference.

Accessibility note: the space is all on one level and is quite accessible!

If you see any benefit of gathering and discussing with other anarchists and revolutionaries about how to strengthen our movement and propagate these ideas, then bring that optimism (with the usual healthy dose of cynicism) to Melbourne in March.

Also, we hope to put a reader out a few weeks before the conference and we are inviting collectives and individuals to write their responses to the proposal, their ideas about what revolution means in the here and now, and what we should be doing.

anarchist.federation.discussion@gmail.com

Neither Church Nor That Other Church

On Racism and Religious Fundamentalism

SourDough

With Fred Nile getting all hot and bothered under his clerical collar about plans for an Islamic school in Camden, I was also getting worked-up contemplating a course of direct confrontation with his white, racist flock (of sheep). But the good reverend did give me pause to stop and think. I thought about race in Australia, I thought about religion and I thought about 'the clash of civilisations'. While I don't see racism in Australia as closely tied to religion – this isn't a particularly religious country and racism here is more closely associated with the national myth and 'Aussie values' – I'd be surprised if the scapegoating of Muslims since 9/11 (and even before) hasn't given a push towards a rising fundamentalist Christianity.

Certainly in the US-of-A fundamentalist, evangelical Christians hold a lot of sway (although this has far deeper roots than simply 9/11). Similarly, a movement also seems to be rising here as evidenced by the growing number of Hillsong freaks – witness them around Redfern playing the role of modern-day colonial missionaries. And now Nile's asserting that Australia must remain a Christian country. It's clear that this 'clash of civilisations' line has been swallowed whole by many of the religious right of every denomination. So here's my problem: while opposing these racists, I still don't want to come down on the side of a religious school. I'm against all religions and their schools and see them as another system of domination and arbitrary social relations that are designed to keep people in their place.

I think that it's important to articulate the aggressive racism of what's happening in Camden from an honest position that lays bare the problems of race and religion rather than sweep the religious aspect aside (or worse, be hypocritical and one-sided about it) in favour of who we perceive as 'victims'. Rather than always taking on issues from a regressive backfoot stance, I think we should set the agenda and create a third, fourth, fifth option where anti-racism is expressed alongside criticisms of the role of religion. Accepting an 'us or them' dichotomy fans the flames of fundamentalist zealots on every side.

At this point you might already see my argument segueing into a discussion of the Iraq war and the 'War on Terror' in general. We have seen the endlessness of this conflict, while underpinned by economics and a myriad of other interests, pushed further by the relish of powerful, right-wing Christian ideologues in the USA, firm in their belief in the 'Crusade' in the Middle East and in the inherent divinity of America*. But in supporting resistance to this invasion it is important to not give a blanket thumbs-up to every group fighting against it. It would be naïve to not see that some of the resistance in Iraq and Afghanistan that is closely tied to religious movements are violently oppressive towards others, such as women and queers. And of course as a general statement against religion that I'm trying to make here, it needs to be emphasised that the majority of religion remains socially conservative – often aggressively homophobic and anti-abortion.

It's important to make a historical note here too – that in the 50's, 60's and 70's the many great anti-colonial struggles throughout North Africa and the Middle East were largely taken on by a secular, progressive Arab left. That this left is now virtually decimated was

in no small part a result of the USA's Cold War policy of supporting and arming hardline Muslim groups in their struggles against the 'Commie threat' (and certainly also a result of the failings of the left itself). That this left is now virtually decimated should also not mean we now give support to whoever else fills that breach in fighting this newest round of colonialism. Instead we must show a particular solidarity to when there is resistance that is tied to more progressive social causes, such as striking oilfield workers in Iraq and revolutionary women's groups in Afghanistan (and yes, you might point out that both of these, not to mention some sections of the anti-colonial resistance I referred to, involve Muslims, but I'm getting to that).

Simply, all of the main organised religions not only end up being a significant impediment on revolutionary social movements, but are tied to, and actively uphold, the institutions of the state. This is true whether it's Christianity in the America's (north and south), Judaism in Israel, Islam in Iran, Hinduism in India – with obviously a host of other similar examples. The rise of evangelism has also seen an additional factor emerge, where extremely socially-conservative churches also link their belief systems into upholding the economic structures of capitalism and the market – Hillsong being the prime example.

Religious denominations that do criticise the excesses of the 'free' market tend to put their energy into negotiating with national governments and supranational bodies like the IMF and World Bank 'on behalf of' the poor and so recuperate and impose their own hierarchies over more radical community-based organising. (The same is also true, of course, of many secular NGOs.) These anti-poverty movements that act 'on behalf of' instead of alongside have been roundly criticised as continuing the line of colonial missionaries screwing local communities and tying their aid to their religion.

For anarchists there always remain the fundamental problems of organised religion: that it is systemically hierarchical; closely aligned with the state; socially oppressive; and that it purposely distracts people from the possibility of social revolution in the here and now. This last point is a real issue. When so much of the world's poorest and working classes are members of one religion or another there is inevitably parts of social movements that while they maybe progressive and revolutionary on some issues are conservative on others (the Sandinistas are a good example of this).

There are no easy solutions and I do support forming alliances with religious folk who do not stomp all over the liberation of others. This still presents a problem though as the difficulty of separating religion from culture and the social hierarchies that religions impose on communities mean alliances are invariably made through faith-based community groups. In the case of Camden though, I do think it's important in allying with Muslims being racially targeted while still critiquing the role of religious schools in indoctrinating children into a particular set of beliefs.

*This is a truth. A large part of the evangelical movement in the US incorporates as part of their beliefs the idea that America is God's country and that its wealth, 'freedoms' and power in the world have been bestowed upon it by the Christian god.

PS The pope is coming to Sydney this year bringing far too many of his zombified followers to something call 'World Youth Day'. Let's tell this homophobe, Nazi pope to fuck off.

Reviews

***Sir, no sir!: the suppressed history of the GI movement to end the war in Vietnam* (2005)**

A David Zeiger film

FTA – Fun Travel Adventure – US army recruiting slogan during the Vietnam War

FTA – Fuck The Army – popular saying of GI's during the Vietnam War

Sir, no sir!, is a documentary film that covers the emergence and development of the anti-war movement of US GIs. The film contains numerous interviews with anti-war soldiers, who tell of their experiences in the war and as anti-war activists. It is a brilliant and important film, uncovering the buried history of the widespread refusal and sabotage of the war by GIs, placing their struggle firmly within the broader anti-war movement.

The film covers the struggle from 1966 throughout the war, and touches on the myth-making cover up of the soldier's anti-war movement. Thousands of soldiers went AWOL (Absent Without Official Leave), or absent without leave, during the war and the Pentagon reported 503 926 cases of desertion. Many of these soldiers were court martialled and imprisoned for their actions. The film documents actions such as the demonstrations organised by the GIs against the war, the struggle out of Presidio Stockade, the boycott movements of companies like Tyrell's, the hiring of a small plane to drop anti-war leaflets on army bases, the soldiers' three days testimony and investigation into the My Lai massacre, and the Constellation ballot, among many others, all of which illustrate the widespread, popular rejection of the war by GIs.

1968 is marked as the year of the full emergence of the GI anti-war movement. By this stage there were many anti-war soldier activist and organising groups, a well-established and widespread underground press operating from the barracks around the US such as the Last Harass, Fatigue Press and Fed Up, and the anti-war coffee houses set up in army towns were widespread. The coffee houses operated as a space off the barracks for soldiers and peace activists to hang out and organise. A number of these were attacked by police and other pro-war groups; one was fired upon and another was firebombed. The soldiers' struggle against the war was waged from the prisons, the barracks, the coffee houses and also on the ground in Vietnam.

The film draws links between the deep rooted and widespread refusal of the war by the soldiers on the ground and Nixon's move towards an air war. As the Armed Forces Journal reported in June of 1971, in an article titled The Collapse of the Armed Forces, "individual units [are] avoiding or having refused combat services, murdering their officers and non-commissioned officers, drug riddled and dispirited, where not beyond mutinous". Talk of mutiny, shooting of officers, and fragging was common and open by this stage of the war. Fragging is a term that refers to the killing of commanding officers, often with a fragmentary grenade. This widespread insubordination is identified as a key motivation for the air war, and ultimately the end of the war.

Intelligence workers also undertook sabotage of the war. These soldiers were trained to speak Vietnamese in order to intercept communication between Vietcong soldiers, determine locations of Vietcong hideouts and movements, and pass on this information as intelligence. However, many of these soldiers began to resist this work. A group of

soldiers formed a collective called WORMS, or We Openly Resist Military Stupidity. They stopped producing intelligence in attempts to sabotage the command structure.

The story of the returning soldiers being spat on by peace activists is exposed as a myth constructed to cover up and transform the memory of the war, and of the anti-war movement. The film argues that there is a clear lack of evidence to support the claims of the spitting hippy story. Instead it argues that the links between the peace movement and the anti-war GI's, as well as logical flaws in the myth such as no one being near soldiers as they returned off a plane, contradicts the popular version of events.

There is far too much to say about this film, its timeliness, and the soldiers' anti-war movement than the space of this review allows, and looking over this short piece it does not do nearly enough justice to this documentary. It is a brilliant and important film.

Mark

Black Rose and Jura fundraiser gig
10 Feb at Jura
w/ The Subverts, The Assassination Collective, Merferalz and Say Cheese and Die

As the relations between Sydney's two anarchist bookshops have wavered from animosity, apathy and basic cordiality over the last 25 years, it was good to see the recent era of friendship and cooperation marked by a joint benefit gig. With Jura the more suitable venue, the (anti-)God's also played their part by breaking a week and a half of rain with a perfect day. This meant the show could be played outside, leaving Jura's large array of books untarnished by raucous music.

Suitably for this day-time show it all kicked off with scones and jam while equipment was being set up. Say Cheese and Die were the first band to play but had to keep it unfortunately short due to one member's broken ribs. Kicking off with their song about the Paris uprising of 1968 was apt given this year is the 40th anniversary of that event. This song perfectly sets the tone for their style – jerky, repetitive rhythms with angular melodies peeking over the top. It's fun and makes you want to dance, except that on this lazy Sunday most of the crowd were content sitting around on the grass while watching the bands play.

After Food Not Bombs had provided plentiful, great food, the Merferalz played. With one person using their skateboard as percussion while the other sang and strummed guitar, they played unamplified. I was sitting a little too far away to catch the entirety of all the songs but every now and then an amazingly beautiful melody would ride down the breeze. If that's a little too poetically cliché, it was again somewhat appropriate for the day.

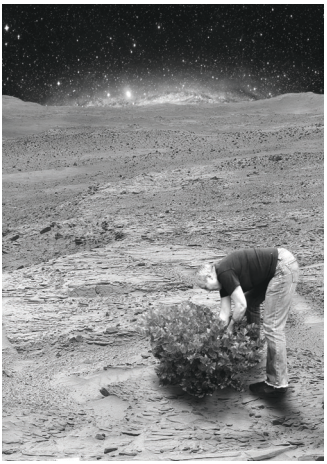
It was then back to Assassination Collective to 'bring da noise' and they did it with plenty of style despite the singers' apologies for frayed voices after 4 shows in 4 days. They are loud and heavy, but also catchy and fun with plenty of subtle hooks. They are one of my favourite bands to watch because their performance seems to constantly shift between really intense and exuberant.

One Liz from Assassination Collective at a different, less sunshiney show

The Subverts finished the day off with their own malady. A growling bass that would build up from lithe breakdowns into thundering riffs with furious guitars (including an awesome and unexpected solo) and driving beats. That'd be some of the finest punk in Sydney.

SourDough

THIS MONTH



- Griff-dawg examines the problems of how politics are gendered and argues for a change in approach.

- Morris Iemma and the NSW Labor government's plans to privatise electricity are laid bare and analysed.

- SourDough grapples with the problems of religion and why they are still a major obstacle for revolutionary movements.

- An invitation to a conference in Melbourne about forming an anarchist federation.

- Reviews of 'Sir, No Sir' and the Black Rose/ Jura fundraiser gig.